

Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs



Dave Bellefeuille

Director of Education and Employment,
Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs

Paula Plum

Minnesota State Approving Agency
Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs

Agenda

- Introductions
- Objective
- Understanding Military Culture
- Demographics
- Types of Military Connections
- Profiles of Enlisted and Officers
- Interviewing
- Challenges and Concerns
- What can we do - retention

Objective

- Establish Veteran population is a unique and separate cultural identity
- Identify different types of military-connected employees/applicants
- Hiring and retention accommodations



The background is a collage of military-related imagery. It features the official seals of the four United States military branches: the Army (top left), Air Force (top right), Navy (bottom left), and Marine Corps (bottom right). In the center, there is a fighter jet in flight, a large naval ship, and a soldier in silhouette. The text "Understanding Military Culture" is prominently displayed in the center in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

Understanding Military Culture

Veterans

Reasons for enlistment

- Honor and devotion to duty
- Personal satisfaction and pride
- Family traditions
- Personal improvement
 - About 82% of officers and 7% of enlisted have bachelors degrees
 - About 11,000 individuals using GI Bill

Culture Defined by Shiraev & Levy (2010)

- A set of Attitudes, Behaviors, and Symbols shared by a large group of people and usually communicated from one generation to the next.
- - Attitudes include beliefs (political, ideological, religious, moral, etc.), values, general knowledge (empirical & theoretical), opinions, superstitions, and stereotypes.
 - Behaviors include a wide variety of norms, roles, customs, traditions, habits, practices, and fashions.
 - Symbols may have the form of a material object, a color, a sound, a slogan, a building, or anything else. People attach specific meanings to symbols and pass them from generation to generation.

Culture

Attitudes

- Cohesion
- Willingness to fight
- Attention to detail
- Disciplined
- Honor and Duty
- Team focused

Behaviors

- Instinctual attention to detail
- Reliance on the unit or team
- Strategic Approaches
- Professional functions: Management of Violence
- Posture

Symbols

- Flag
- Uniform
- The salute
- Service Organizations
- Insignia, ranks, awards

Culture

Military Language

- Acronyms
- Cadence
- Rank and grade
- Unspoken language
- Non-verbal
- Terminology



Minnesota Military

Army National Guard: 10,971

Army Reserve: 2,247

Air Guard: 2,269

Air Force Reserve: 1,012

Navy Reserve: 597

Marine Reserve: 448

Coast Guard: 33



17,577 Reserve
Component

Approximately 2,900 on
Active Duty

Types of Military Connections

- **Veterans**
- **Currently serving**
 - Active Duty
 - Reserve
 - National Guard
- **Former military**

Armed Forces

- *(Federal definition)* **Armed Forces** means the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard, including their Reserve components.
- **Different branches**



Veterans

Service obligation is complete and one is separated from service with a discharge status other than dishonorable.

Federal: Title 38 United States Code §3.1(d)

- "Veteran means a person who has served in the active military, naval, or air service who was discharged or released under *conditions other than dishonorable*."
- http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=pt38.1.3&rgn=div5#se38.1.3_11

Minnesota: Statute 197.447

- a citizen of the United States or a resident alien
- who has been separated *under honorable conditions*
- from any *branch of the armed forces of the United States*
- after having served on **active duty**
 - for 181 consecutive days or
 - by reason of disability incurred while serving on active duty,
 - or who has met the minimum active duty requirement as defined by Code of Federal Regulations, title 38, section 3.12a, or
 - who has active military service certified under section 401, Public Law 95-202.
- <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=197.447>

Veterans

Census Bureau: Veterans are men and women who have

- served (even for a short time), but
- are not currently serving, on active duty in the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, or the Coast Guard, or
- who served in the U.S. Merchant Marine during World War II.
- People who served in the National Guard or Reserves are classified as veterans **only** if they were ever called or ordered to active duty, not counting the 4-6 months for initial training or yearly summer camps.

VA: The term “**veteran**” means a person who

- served in the active military, naval, or air service, and
- who was discharged or released therefrom under conditions other than dishonorable

Active Duty

- 10 US Code § 101 “**Activity duty** means full-time duty in the active military service of the United States.”
- **Is a component of the armed forces (“active duty”)**
 - Think wearing a uniform for their full time job
 - Service typically on and around military installations, but also includes recruiting duty and other types of local service
 - Move frequently (Permanent change of station = PCS)
 - Worldwide footprint (we’re all over the place!)
 - “Civilians” none of the time
- **Don’t confuse with “being activated”**
 - “I’m on activity duty” vs. “I have been activated”
 - Different protections may apply in the classroom

Reserve and Guard

- Think 1 weekend a month, 2 weeks during the year
- Military members who walk among us
- Civilians “most of the time”
- Generally don’t move around; not subject to PCS
- Are considered local
- Federal military reserve forces
- Guard: State military force (each state has their own), for example, we are most likely working with MN National Guard, but may also have students serving in adjacent states or even online students serving in their respective states.
- Dual state and federal status when ***activated***.

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Former Military

- Those who have served but are not veterans

Do you think reintegration and transition is different for those who are veterans and those who are former military?

Profiles - Enlisted

- E-1 to E-3 (\$40-\$45k)
 - Sales, Customer Service, Team Lead, Supervisor
- E-4 (\$46-\$55k)
 - Team Lead, Supervisor, light project management
- E-5 and E-6 (\$55- \$71k)
 - Project Management
 - Supervisor and light Manager
- E-7 to E-9 (\$60-\$115k)
 - Manager
 - Regional manager
 - General Manager

Profiles - Officer

- O-1 to O-3 (\$55-\$100k)
 - Regional Manager
- O-4 to O-6 (\$85-\$170k)
 - District manager
 - Director
- O-7 to O-10 (\$145-230k)
 - President/Vice President
 - Executive
 - Senior Director

Interview - Probing Questions

- What was the largest project/department you have overseen?
- How many people were involved in the project and what was your role?
- What is the largest (financial) value of assets, equipment you were charged with?
- What is your leadership approach and style?

Interview - Focus

- Effective, action orientated leadership capabilities
- Safety and loss prevention expertise
- Budgeting and planning
- Strong perspectives on personal values and accountability
- Overcoming adversity and problem solving
- Extensive training in delegation, motivation and inspiration
- Diversity

Interview - Training

- Tactical leadership skill building
- Basic Training
- AIT, A School, AFSC, MOS
- College degree and L&C
- JST or CCAF
- Transition assistance programs
- ACE training credits to college credits
 - MNSCU VETS

Interview – Military Experience

- Leadership – delegation, motivation and inspiration
- Integrity – High moral standards
- Personal Responsibility – lend all skill sets to accomplish the mission
- Teamwork – passionate about working together to complete the mission
- Work Ethic - Duty to self and country, honor your word and commitments
- Perseverance – Overcome adversity

Interview - Talent Development

- **Professional Military Education**
 - Leadership Development
 - Technical Skills Training
- **Job Proficiency and Upgrade Training**
 - Centrally Developed within the Career Field
 - Required training for different levels of Leadership
- **Force Development of Teams**
 - Create Your Own Plan, Teams Help You Reach Your Goals
- **Board Selection for Promotion – Testing for Promotion**
 - Selected by Peers in the Service Branch
 - Testing Based on Career Knowledge and Military/Leadership Knowledge
- **Always Growing New Leaders and Replacing the Talent Pool**

Top Concerns

- Pace and structure of a new workplace
- Perceived anti-military/Veteran talk
- Supervisors unresponsive to requests for accommodation
- Staff and supervisors “called me out”
- Attitudes of younger employees
- “Military skills do not transfer to civilian life. Essentially you come home as an unskilled worker in a bad economy.”

HalfBattle2013.org

Top Concerns

Work with Iraq, Afghanistan, Somali nationals

- nearly a quarter of student veterans are dissatisfied with school administration
- more than a quarter are dissatisfied with civilian students
- more than a quarter are dissatisfied with funding opportunities for their education
- Successful acclimation to academic mission?

Communication Challenge

- Returning Service Members being given various and conflicting resource information by leaders;
- No consistent message from the variety of reintegration service providers;
- Over 1500 various websites offering help to Service Members, employers, or both;
("drinking from a firehose")
- Need to distill this down to a simple, consistent process to identify legitimate employment opportunities.

Action – What can we do to help?

Military Life

- Create a peer mentorship program
- Establish specific points of contact
- Resources readily available in work area/breakroom
- Create veteran-specific communities
- Understand the need for various learning methods
- Try to be flexible